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THOUGHTS
And How I Came to Write Them

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PREFACE

Covering a period of years, these Thoughts were written from day to day as circumstances arose to give them birth.

There is delightful companionship in
healthful thinking.

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THOUGHTS
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Character

The greatest architecture is building character.

No matter what character we have established in the past, our conduct from day to day must justify the confidence of our friends.

We stand in admiration and amazement at the best in human character and intellect, and in amazement alone at the worst in both.

An absurdity—a high social position with a low moral character.

Beware the man who promises you fair treatment for the future while giving you the worst of a present deal.

To find the size of a big man, test him out in some small transaction.

Wanting some general work done about my yard, I went to see a man whom I found surrounded by the most impressive evidences of poverty. I described to him the work I wanted done and he promised that he would be on hand the next morning. There was something in his manner that made me suspicious that he did not really want the job. Sure enough he did not come and, though being near, gave me no word of his failure to fulfill his promise. I got this Thought out of it anyway:

A great many people stay poor because they will not build up character.

There are many people whose measure of character you cannot take fully until after they are married.

Money often goes to quarreling relatives; good character does not get into the courts for litigation.

It has been my experience many times that, when I defended myself against the attack of a vicious dog, I found myself in a quarrel with its master.

I gleaned from these experiences this valuable item of information:

Estimate of a man can be gauged greatly by the character of his dog.

A woman who is better than a man simply because her sex imposes penalties for wrong-doing, rarely points the way for bettering men.

Among the hired men we had on the farm, when I was a boy, I noticed that the ones who talked glibly and coarsely of women, were often arrant cowards when in the presence of the women in our home. Subsequent observation has helped to justify this statement:

A man who is over-bold in the presence of a coarse woman is usually too timid in the presence of a refined one.

A bossy man is usually a cringer before what he thinks is great power.

A cartoonist sometimes becomes a character assassin.

The man who says all men have their price, by including himself, shows at least the virtue of frankness.

People who will do unfair things for you are likely to do unfair things against you.

Some people have enough passion to be human ; some have enough to be brutal, and some do not have enough to be either.

Character, like the wireless message, radiates in all directions over land and sea, hill and dale, mountain and valley—silently—unseen—and makes itself manifest beyond the range of sound and vision.

Childhood

All the world worships at the shrine of babyhood.

A woman's whisper and a child's lisp are the farthest carrying sounds in the world.

It is the fate of sex that denies a man expressions of affection for a lovely young lady whom as a child he was privileged to love.

While it is criminal to work a child all the time, it is likely to become a criminal if it does no work at all.

We are more interested in the painting of a dirty faced child than in that of the angel hovering above it.

Crime

Crime is as much a condition as an intention.

We are now witnessing a revolution in our attitude toward crime and its punishment. More and more we are realizing that crime is to be dealt with in the light of its condition rather than in that of its punishment. In the past we were permitting the seeds of crime to take root in nearly every industrial field and social path. To keep from being overwhelmed, we tried to destroy the ripened harvest.

But now we are seeing to what we grow. We are beginning to demand that the child be born right. We are watching more its rounded development of health, education and morals. We are supplanting the saloon with a school, a library, or some useful industry. We are hunting the places where disease germinates, be it physical, social, or political. The penitentiary is being made a place of reformation so that its inmates will be, if possible, turned into useful members of society. These moves look as though we are finding ourselves as we have not done in the centuries past.

It is vastly better for society to reform a criminal than to execute him.

In dealing with the criminal, it is well to take account of what we are doing for society; in fact, the primary object is its safety, not the punishment of the criminal. Reformation is a buffer that helps to save society the shock of crime.

A certain martyrdom is liable to follow the atonement of blood no matter how culpable the victim may be.

I once saw a young man being tried for a foul murder. A dramatic attorney was raising the audience to a high pitch of excitement. Friends were busy with the fainting mother of the victim. I glanced at the prisoner to find him the one cool and collected person in the room. I was amazed and wondered for a moment if it were self-control, born of innocence. Then came to me this summing of the case which I am sure will be verified by any criminal lawyer:

We have reason to assume at least capability for the crime when the murder-suspect is the coolest person in the court room.

Taking foolish chances against danger is taking criminal chances.

A thief is not so hard to deal with as a stingy man, as he has fewer points of attack.

A man who will not talk will bear watching; criminals are often strangely silent.

Most of us can, in a fit of passion, easily commit a crime.

Dress

There are certain things that even fashion cannot justify.

Your clothes and your language should be equally fitting.

The more some people spend for clothes the more they drive away favor.

Many people are willing to dress well enough to be dead beats.

The last person to adopt a ridiculous fashion suffers more derision than the one who first adopted it.

Dress not as well as the rest of your family and after a while you will be considered inferior.

Economics

The success of the ten cent store, which is one of the marvels of the mercantile world, and that of one low-priced automobile whose sales far surpass that of any one thing in the same time in the history of the world, leads me to write:

Nothing is too cheap that serves its purpose well.

Our need for a large income depends more upon our extravagant tastes than on our real necessities.

He is fortunate who wants the things he knows he can have.

It is not worth while to own anything you do not appreciate.

There are many things apparently worthless that render a great service to humanity.

We should aim to make use of many seemingly bad things rather than to seek their destruction.

I was once asked by a friend to make him a loan for a project that I feared might not turn out well. He was honest and I wanted to favor him. I was puzzled for the answer when it flashed across my mind that

It is easier to refuse a friend a loan than to press him for payment.

The hardest bill to collect is one for damages to property that has been loaned.

The foundation of many a man's wealth is selfishness followed with persistency.

After an eruption of Vesuvius the smoke scarcely clears away before the inhabitants push up its sides to replant their vineyards. The San Francisco earthquake might have been followed by a tidal wave, one of the most disastrous of modern times, but the first thing that followed the quake was a rush to rebuild the city. I sum it up thus:

There is no danger zone surrounding commercial possibilities that man will not cross.

The most wanton torture is that of the rich trying to kill time.

One who is not satisfied with a fair price will not be satisfied with any kind of price.

One who gives all he has will be permitted to languish in the poorhouse by those to whom he has given.

A country that makes a specialty of climate is like a man who wears a clean shirt a whole week, not much good for anything else.

Demand without production is helpless; production without demand is useless.

There can be no general prosperity where labor has small reward.

The idealists give us much on which to feed, but if it were not for the utilitarians, they would starve us all.

Ethics

People who are continuing to think themselves misunderstood are usually asking too much adjustment in others to their own understanding.

Drive no stakes of prejudice or hate in the middle of the highway.

There is a wide difference between a constructive critic and a nagging critic.

One who is severe on wrong-doers may be a wrong-doer in the excess of his severity.

Deal with people not as though they are dishonest, but in a way so that if they turn out to be so, you are safe.

The most charming thing is to win people, never forgetting to leave them the better for the winning.

It is more charitable, and often more in keeping with the truth, to term men's faults only differences.

As we journey through life let us help others on the way.

Every time you perform a generous act you add a star to the banner of your life.

The deepest measure of a man's character can be taken by the regard and protection he gives to woman.

In defending your self-respect never fear to make enemies.

Genuine repentance must bear the seal of a corrected life.

Fads

Fads are more widely contagious than disease.

Fads have an affinity for most of the human race, whether barbarous or civilized.

Men become less superstitious but more prone to fads as they become more highly civilized.

One who changes fads occasionally preserves a better poise than he who keeps the same fad all his life.

Friendship

A great part of the enjoyment we get in this life is sympathy friends give us when we are in distress.

Friendship cannot long endure where the mind is prepared only for flattery.

Prejudice may be as dangerous as hate unless the hate follows friendship.

We are fortunate if we can speak to our worst enemies.

Business misunderstandings germinate more easily in the soil of friendship.

We sometimes spoil a friend by going into business with him.

You need to handle your friends with more diplomacy than you do your enemies.

If you wish to test a friend loan him money.

Sometimes the greater our friendship, the wider it opens the door of criticism.

We cannot stand the criticisms of our friends and we have no confidence in those of our enemies.

Government

After the state, the largest community of interest that has stood the test of time is that of the family.

Colonies of a socialistic or communistic character have generally been failures. They seem to lack the strong cohesive character of the state and many of them have tampered with the family relation. Destroy the home, that shrine of earthly glory, the tie that binds civilization will be broken and man will head straight for the jungle.

Many a man who dissipates half his life, thinks he can make a success of the other half if he can but get a change in the system of government.

When I was a boy on the farm I noticed that the hired men we had who dissipated and saved nothing, were, with scarcely an exception, bitterly arraigining the government and the builders of nearly every success in life. As I have surveyed a still wider range, I find that the malcontents the world over, array themselves against the best governments on earth.

There are people who object to force inside of law, but want it outside of law.

The final test of civilization of a people is the respect they have for law.

In the final analysis, law is for the protection of man against himself.

The more ignorant a man is the more he thinks he ought to govern someone else.

Unless governed by the law of good manners, we can have anarchy in ordinary conversation.

Representative government can never eliminate the stupendous influence one person will sometimes exercise over the destinies of a nation.

Great wealth and great poverty will disintegrate a nation in about the same time.

Industrial

In accomplishing big things, we dare not pause to observe small niceties.

Exactness can sometimes make much unreasonable trouble.

Success depends quite as much on our ability to see that we are wrong as to see that we are right.

Greatest achievement is attained under pressure, even if the pressure is sometimes by poverty.

Many a hard mental worker is physically lazy.

Go among strangers to get a start; among your friends their jealousies will sometimes amount to more than their support.

With a definite end in view, it sometimes pays to borrow money with which to buy good clothes.

So much can be gained by taking an intelligent advantage of momentum.

When one has a good job he does not appreciate he should be put out, but if holding one without appreciation, he should get out.

Idle, waiting hours are often quite as damaging to employee as they are to employer.

Reparation for the thing we failed to do in the past, can best be made by doing the thing right now.

Watch carefully for the moment when assistance will be regarded as interference.

Even a good thing will not always sell; it must be the vogue.

A very poor thing may be the vogue and sell easily.

One always looking for flaws leaves too little time for construction.

Go where travellers come from to find a prosperous country.

The way to cure hatred of the rich is to accumulate some property yourself.

Labor is apt to look upon employing capital as an inexhaustible bubbling spring.

Carnegie will get quite as many criticisms for the manner of the giving of his fortune as he will for the manner of its making.

Kindness

We can lighten our troubles greatly by taking a little human interest in those of other people.

A kind heart is the fountain-head of good manners.

If your heart is filled with human sympathy you are sure to have friends.

Keeping secret innocent confidences is like keeping bread to spoil when there are hungry people about.

Expressions of affection should not be delayed until they must be mingled with funeral tears.

No person is wholly bad who is kind to any living thing.

We seem to feel keenest the kindness that comes from one who is generally cruel.

Walking through the grounds of the University of Minnesota one day, I noticed a young lady sitting on the steps of the dormitory, holding in her lap a sadly emaciated cat. The girl students ate in this dormitory so she was but a few feet from where something might have been obtained for this starving cat. There was no question about her tenderness toward the suffering animal yet she did not secure a few crumbs which she could so easily have done. This incident made it easy for me to write:

There is much kindness in the world but not enough thoughtful kindness.

Guard with care lest the bitter fruit of harshness develop on the tree of righteousness.

Our regrets are the least for those past errors that were made on the side of kindness.

Observations

We should not expect all the present to be as good as the best of the past.

The knowledge that gauges our limitations is often highly valuable.

Now and then we meet people whose faults are an interesting study.

Try to feel appreciation at the time you are doing well.

We must accept most great people with great faults.

The word perfection is a badly abused term.

Most people are willing to pay a big price to get something for nothing.

I was in an electric store one day when a man came in to inquire about an electric device that fastens about the ankle and is recommended to cure disease. The proprietor, more conscientious than anxious to make a sale, argued against its efficiency. The customer waxed warm in its defence and for a full half hour the debate continued. After the customer left, I read to my store friend, much to his amusement, the following which I had written during the stubborn contest:

The most thankless task is trying to keep people from being fooled.

We sometimes get badly squeezed between truth and diplomatic diplomacy.

Ofttimes in a negative statement we express a most positive thought.

Sometimes our second impression corrects the first.

The most healthful recompense of love is trust.

Wit can render instant aid or lasting harm.

Unclean people often make a great fuss about dirt.

The more you oppose a crank the more he thinks he is needed.

Sometimes an outside view is better than an inside view.

Soap and the locomotive are among the greatest evangels of civilization.

Some people are more tolerant of evil than they are of honest mistakes.

Your seat is not fully paid for at the box office if you withhold your enthusiasm from a good actor.

Those things that appeal to our appetite most from youth to old age are either sweet or bitter.

Try to make up your mind early so you will have ample time to change it if necessary.

Sometimes in pleasing ourselves we please others most.

Truth, to my mind, beats fiction for dramatic interest.

A certain United States Senator inspired me to write the following, long before the World War found a test that greatly embarrassed this country:

It is not safe to pin your faith to a firebrand.

The stingy man thinks all other men either stingy or wasteful.

Extravagant people usually have some stingy spots.

A one track mind must expect head-on collisions.

Some things have no reason for their existence except that they are expensive.

There seems to be wilder enthusiasm over fakes than over square propositions.

Some people express displeasure, seeking to create the impression that they have known better things.

People who are always talking about their old town will praise the new when they return to the old.

When you say of a profile picture that it would be better if front view, you unconsciously admit that the artist has created an impression of beauty.

True art consists in the concealment of art.

Those who will beat us sometimes inspire our confidence easiest.

With the most exalted position there may come moments of great humiliation.

We meet so many people who seem to be both smart and ignorant.

Revolutionizing changes do not always come from inner professional circles.

Life is so much more to be cherished while the sense of humor lasts.

There is a wide difference between egotism and the consciousness of power to accomplish a purpose.

Unless seasoned with the sense of humor, even conscience is unpalatable to the taste.

Not much of a start has been made by one who thinks he has finished his education.

The very perfection of a thing may sometimes be its greatest fault.

Rather ask enough questions to offend occasionally than to permit mistakes from asking too few.

You can make more money out of people by pandering to their prejudices than by going against them.

It is hard for people who have nothing to do to get ready for anything on time.

Some years ago when Iowa was dry and Minnesota was wet, a heavily loaded excursion train, bound for St. Paul and Minneapolis, was quite unloaded and a mad rush was made for the saloons in the first town across the line.

No art gallery in the world would have unloaded a train as did those saloons. It has always been a puzzle to me why the desire to get drunk is so great, particularly in those who have not acquired the liquor disease. I think the following solves at least one phase of the problem:

The easiest way for the dullard to get a variation of sensibilities is to get drunk.

Some people judge the value of a picture only by knowing the value of the frame.

Music is the link between earth and heaven.

A woman sees earth and heaven through the affections.

Inconsistency is the price of genius.

Attainments are failures that make us less likable.

We sometimes take a livelier interest in the foolishness of youth than we do in the wisdom of age.

There is much in architecture that interests, but so little that satisfies.

Throw wide your curtains and let your light shine out on the world.

So many people are afraid that bulldogs and saloons will get hurt.

That a stove should have perfect chimney connections, is a hint to other smokers.

Truth sometimes seems so hard that the soul cries out for the softening influence of a miracle.

One test of strength is the ability to take defeat graciously.

We must brave much criticism of our own generation if we wish the favor of posterity.

If we can speak of the departed as though they were living, it is justice to them and an inspiration to us.

One who does not have an inquiring mind at home will learn little by travel.

One day I went to lunch with two gentlemen one of whom is very circumspect. I related an incident that happened to a neighbor's chickens when we threw some black Mexican sweet corn to them which they seemed to take for rats. The consternation which took place among those chickens was a gem for a moving picture. During the recital of this incident, my circumspect friend sat austere and unresponsive. I was then moved to write:

Some people cannot even fraternize with a joke.

Steps slightly out of time save the bridge.

Machinery that runs smooth runs cold.

Right questions rightly asked are taken as a compliment.

If you do not appreciate what you now have you will never appreciate what you will have.

It is necessary for some people to go away from home to see how much they do not like.

The finer house you build the sharper will be the criticism.

One way to quiet a critic is to give him the job he criticizes.

There are times when it is quite as easy to look ahead as it is to look back.

The desire to have short visits prolonged is a strong recommendation for them.

Sometimes one does not like the right thing if it comes suddenly after long experience with the wrong.

Anything too sweet is likely to sour.

Music serves no other purpose with some people than to keep either their feet or their tongues going.

When one has an axe in his hand he should approach a tree with a prayer on his lips.

What we do not do for people there can be no quarrel about the manner of its doing.

Those people interest us most who have both ideas and ideals.

Some people have a way of making their faults pleasing, while others have a way of making their virtues repulsive.

When a young man I never had a quarrel with any gentleman over the favor of a young lady friend. I think I was fortunate in looking upon such quarrels as being both disgraceful and foolish. It seemed to me to be almost brutal to covet the lady who did not want me. If the rival could win her it seemed to me most indelicate that I should in any way interfere with her wish.

I recommend the following to my young friends, believing it will save many heartaches and violent disturbances:

There can be no place for jealousy if one does not want that which he cannot win.

Either jealousy or a sense of consecration often makes suffering wives the severest critics of old maids.

My great mistake is to think my standards should always be those of other people.

If we do not recognize faults in ourselves we are dangerous.

One who, knowing less than I do, can take a portion of my knowledge and do more with it than I can do with all I have, has a genius that I lack.

Since the finite mind cannot grasp the scope of the Infinite, there will always be problems to solve.

There is delightful companionship in healthful thinking.

When love thinks it has done enough, decay has set in.

The balance between contentment and ambition is delicately poised.

Some people have just enough ability to nag at progress.

If you wish to catch the high swinging pendulum, do not follow it but hurry to the other side, for it will come to you.

The happiness of those who possess that which we wish, should always be a factor in the pursuit of the thing desired.

The plain clever woman need never envy the beautiful woman unless more clever than beautiful.

A man is likely to think he is a charmer in the presence of a gracious woman.

To win a woman's highest devotion a man must be just, tender, and a shade imperious.

Some things are striking and show great strength simply because they are inharmonious.

Parenthood

Parenthood is but a shame if the parents do not fully discharge their duty in the rearing of their children.

People who have large families are not always the kindest to children.

A man who will desert a wife because she is childless would not be reliable if her health were undermined with excessive child-bearing.

The man who ignores the obligation to his offspring, and to the mother, commits a crime next to murder.

Whoever cared for us when we were young and helpless, deserves our undying gratitude.

God made for companionship two masterpieces, the human mind and the mother's heart.

Pleasure

Pleasure is the divine seasoning in the diet of life.

The highway of pleasure is crossed by many toll-gates.

The one who has all kinds of pleasure devices has all kinds of troubles.

If you wish to be fashionable you must deny yourself many real comforts.

Wherever there is pleasure there seems to lurk danger.

Pleasure and pain seem to have been accidentally cast in the same mold.

Pleasure comes to us, not as the main aim in life, but as a by-product of worthy deeds.

One of the greatest pleasures is to have a vision and then in after years see it justified.

One gets small pleasure out of life when his criticisms greatly outnumber his enthusiasms.

Political

There is many a powerful force in politics that represents but a small vote.

Certainly the history of the prohibition party finds echo in the two following:

There is many a powerful force in politics that represents but a small vote.

There are many things which mean a great force for the future whose very presence now mean temporary defeat.

We are willing to excuse the dog that we think is barking for us.

The question that candidates for office dare not mention, is most to be feared.

We are best pleased with reforms that apply far enough away so as not to affect ourselves.

There is no such thing as wise regulation of a generally acknowledged evil; the only wise thing is persistent opposition.

Psychological

A number of people together will sometimes perform an act that the individual would scorn to do.

If one's enthusiasm is at the right pitch, he can have a good time with that which would ordinarily be considered torture.

The fault a man does not realize he has, is usually an extreme one.

One usually recognizes the least his greatest fault.

It is almost as easy to criticize those who are helping us as those who are opposing us.

We feel more hurt to lose on another's judgment than on our own.

Fulsome praise is liable to be followed by destructive criticism.

If a woman is weak, she is liable to increase her devotion to a strong man in proportion to his abuse.

One's criticism is often the mirror of his own fault.

The faster we travel the keener we feel the loss of a few moments.

The masses cling together more closely when following one thing, though false, than they do when individually seeking the truth.

We somehow get money from seemingly impossible places for the things we want the most, as is illustrated in the case of whiskey, tobacco, and marriage licenses.

One who thinks he is too proud to fight is dangerous if driven into a fight.

Truth, garnished with sarcasm, may be spice or gall to the taste.

People who live on the car line do the most running to catch the car.

When you inject yourself into the affairs of other people it does not take long for you to think you are a partner.

We can swallow most of the bitter pills of life if they are sugar coated.

Psychology is one of the autocratic rulers in the affairs of mankind.

Many things are serious only in proportion as we feel them.

Ofttimes things are either admired or condemned simply because they are old.

We are usually less charitable of oddities among relatives than among strangers.

Often the one who is practicing an evil seems as contented and happy as the one who is opposing it.

Forbidden minutes are often hours of joy.

In some particular thing we are apt to differ most strongly with those in whom we have had the most confidence.

We love the calm best after the lashing fury of the storm.

The halo of romance, if it lives a thousand years, resolves itself into the nucleus of truth.

He who would get the greatest enjoyment does not want the best first. We read a novel best by reading the sequel last. The most interesting lover is the one who toys with your suit.

The mind delights most in being led through a mystic maze before reaching the open door.

Many a dormant moral issue is brought to life by economic pressure.

Society is heavily responsible when it permits those evils to exist that can be reached by votes.

Rightly managed, even savagery can be used as a patriotic asset.

Sentiment, dipped in the blood of martyrs, writes indelibly.

Love Likes To Pull On The Line

I have been asked several times what is meant by this. If you have ever watched a fisherman with a payout reel and a long line, toying with a gamey fish, now paying out, now pulling in; or if you have ever noticed a coquettish girl toying with a lover, the meaning will be quite plain.

The stimulation of a fight, and the balm of reconciliation in after years, will always have a fascination for men.

The evil itself is not always a greater problem than that of the people who tolerate it.

Religion

Some people are diplomatically pious.

The meanest people are those who mix religion with their meanness.

Ofttimes our belief, if in another, we would regard a superstition.

Though a man may have no religion of his own, in a controversy, he will almost invariably defend the religion of his parents.

Atheism has often been caused by religious dogmas, while every step in science broadens our vision of a great Creator.

Ofttimes an infidel is simply one who does not believe another's religion.

Search the by-paths of humanity and you will have no trouble finding the main highway that leads to the Throne.

When religious fervor and passion join forces in a man, he is often more dangerous than a wild beast.

A religious belief can be either an anchor of safety or a shoal of prejudice.

Much that is taken for religion is but the dregs of an inflamed imagination.

Piety, to attain full stature, must be nourished on the milk of human kindness.

Sometimes religious fanaticism will accomplish results where sensible philosophy will fail.

Neither ignorance nor intelligence seem to have much effect upon religious belief.

Beware one who lubricates his conscience with the oil of religious prejudice.

A religious fanaticism may work immeasurable harm and sometimes great good.

A skeptic in religion is often a great weather prophet.

One who is excessively pious after being excessively wicked, will bear watching.

Any religion that has a sympathetic human application for the needs of this world, is certain to find favor.

No matter how fallacious a religion may be, its destruction never satisfies unless replaced by another.

Wickedness sometimes helps to increase the piety of certain people.

Many a person of deep religious fervor falters in pushing a high moral purpose.

An immoral character, glossed with religious pretension, is like a rotten egg with an Easter coloring.

Our religion, in its humanitarian application, does not rise above our civilization.

I am quite willing to leave the chapter on religion as it stands without comment, further than to say that I have tried not to inflict wounds to denominational beliefs for I believe in the kindest tolerance and respect toward every religious conviction. In spite of error and hypocrisy, they are all trying to lead the way to better things.

Living instead of talking our religion will save us bruises from its many debatable angles.

Sociological

It is not best for two people to try to live together who cannot mend the break of a quarrel.

The bridge of life is built on the scaffold of action, but rests finally on the piers of results.

One who accepts the general ideas of his time gets along smoothest, but he does least for progress.

The main spring of life should be tempered with kindness, but not to weakness, for it is worthless if men do not feel its power.

Most people are too slow to believe, but once you get them going, they believe too much.

Frequently the condemned have better manners than those who condemn.

All are great generals who conquer themselves.

When the manners are the most agreeable the conscience is not always the liveliest.

Dispensing of charity is among the most difficult of tasks.

With harmony lacking, the worst place you can be is among your relatives.

The single standard is the only way to ballast the social ship with an even keel for the voyage of life, assailed by the many storms of passion.

The man who will exonerate the saloon for its temptation, is almost certain to be one who will not do the same for a woman.

If you permit a child to shirk a duty, your advice to perform that duty is worthless.

The heaviest tasks are liable to be heaped upon the most conscientious member of the family.

Avoid dropping a lump of disappointment into the milk of human kindness.

Great mistakes will often remain for long periods in the face of high intelligence.

It is a rare pleasure to know one who is both particular and agreeable.

He is more successful who is always fighting for something than one who spends his time fighting against things.

We are sometimes greatly attached to people of whom we utter many complaints.

Some people who are honest on principle do a great many dishonest acts through selfish impulses.

Where the pressure is heavy look out for leaks.

Sometimes the multitude can be moved to do an ungracious act as well as the individual.

The town bully usually becomes the meekest of citizens.

Most living creatures, if left to reproduce without hindrance, will eventually destroy themselves with their own excess of numbers.

Reform is liable to go to extreme in proportion to the depth of the wrong that gave it birth.

If one is forcefully bad there is in him the soil that can nourish the roots of good.

Sex perversion and religious prejudice have cost the world so much.

There is a wide difference between cleansing immorality, and stirring it only to make a bad smell.

When we open the window to look into a soul, it is pleasing to feel that we may be letting light into a chamber that has previously been dark.

The home fires do not burn well in either crowded apartments or in the spacious mansion.

Many things that are unlady-like for a lady to do are ungentlemanly for a gentleman to do.

When a woman ceases to be trusting she ceases to be lovely.

An old lady, if she has lived right, is a crown on the brow of girlhood.

A man's affections are likely to be reached through his passions; a woman's passions are more than likely to be reached through her affections.

To keep a woman in the harbor of safety, protected from the buffeting storms of the sea, she must be anchored to a man, to a home, to children and to religion.

We can place milestones on the highway of our life if we pause occasionally to take an inventory of ourself.

We will become dyspeptic if we diet on past regrets.

The application of polygamy in the Mormon religion, and many other things of like character, inspired this:

Men quickly find a theory that adapts itself to their desires.

We are thankful for what we get in proportion to the denials we have experienced.

About the time we have subdued the fires of youth that threaten to consume us, we find ourselves battling with the infirmities of age.

In the following I have been held to account for offering a challenge:

It is the blackness of a man's heart that prevents him from treating a negro white.

For my answer I simply offer these two thoughts:

Our superiority can be proven only by being just and kind to our fellow man.

They who would keep other people down are not coming up very fast themselves.

At one time I was a land examiner for a loan company in South Dakota. One cold windy day I drove across a farm to the rear of the barnyard where a girl, not over twelve years of age, was plowing. Stubble and weeds had choked her plow, throwing it out of the ground. The girl was not strong enough to pull the plow back to its place in the furrow. She wore a raincoat inside which the wind had gathered, puffing it out like a balloon. The poor child was looking toward the house crying and did not notice my approach. Though benumbed by the cold so she could scarcely speak, her gratitude was evident when I tied my team and hers to the fence and took her to the house where I found the mother so engrossed with hard work that she had forgotten that suffering child in the field. The farm was a fine one and showed thrift.

The memory of that farm tragedy, what I know of sweat shops in the great cities, and what I know as one of the factors of the World War, have given me inspiration to write:

There is no efficiency that can compensate if it takes the soul out of life.

No man will continue to act contrary to the shape of his head.

Many of the great reforms of society do not come from the upper levels, but from the upheavals of the lower strata.

The reason why the Indian has a better social standing than the negro is because he scalped our ancestors instead of permitting them to make a slave of him.

Traits

Some people are so constituted that they get most of their pleasures out of trouble.

Some people in trying to do big things do a great many small things.

Some people have a philosophy of indifference that permits them to be happy regardless of the suffering of others.

Some people exert an influence in the world largely through their ability to make others angry.

One usually recognizes the least his most prominent characteristic.

Some people are always busy without getting to the main point.

Now and then we find a person who is so loyal to his friends that he will do most any kind of a dishonorable act for them.

People who have done mean things together are pretty sure, sooner or later, to say mean things of each other.

Many a person with high sense of honor will, through sheer stubbornness, often subvert the truth.

Some people would rather be robbed by a flatterer than be favored by a critic.

We part with our money most freely to those who are making lots of it.

Many a person who will not lead the way will tramp on your heels if he walks behind you.

Men's acts are quite as often governed by their temperaments as by their judgments.

Some people are governed more by what they dislike than by what they like.

Some men are masculine only; they are rugged, and sometimes grand in their ruggedness, but they lack fine lines.

There is many an "old maid" who is married.

Affection with some women amounts almost to disease.

Some women are feminine only; they are delicate, lace-like, but they are feathers on the highway of life.

A woman thinks smoking a masculine trait and she will excuse anything she thinks masculine in a man.

While a woman is losing confidence in one man she usually is reposing it in another.

Tyranny

The last to repent and reform himself is the tyrant.

A tyrant has the least respect for one whom he can conquer.

There is no tyranny so dangerous as ignorance clothed with sudden power.

A man who will take abuse from a superior will give it to an inferior.

The extent one will encroach on the rights of another depends much on the weight of his wagon.

The more obsequious a man is to one person the more tyrannical he will be to another.

He who always plays for power will often stand on the neck of one person to reach his arms around the neck of another.

Some people try to appear big by trying to make someone else look little.

Virtue

It is surprising how quickly a bad man will find a bad woman.

One way to teach virtue to girls is to teach it to boys.

The libertine has to look back only over fields strewn with the ashes of burned virtue.

Sometimes severity manifests the truest and kindest heart; compare the surgeon with his knife and the betrayer with a box of sweets.

A man with artistic tastes, and no compunction of conscience, makes the most dangerous of libertines.

In testing the virtue of a girl a man usually makes a bad test of himself.

Some people have an idea that virtue exists only where the blood is cold.

There will always be a crop of girls to be taught, that as soon as a man ceases to treat them with honor they should cease to treat him with affection.

Vocational

Except in rare instances, and for brief periods of time, the best recreation is work.

There are people who will endure almost any humiliation rather than work.

The man who gives small reward for a small salary will do the same for a large salary.

A young man is not fitted for life's battle until he has met and survived defeat.

One who works hard without good management gets a worse deal than the lazy man.

If you keep too busy to look at time you will not know that it is passing.

It is not best to try to get a living out of the things you want to play with.

One day I was watching a traveling man, nicely dressed, talking pleasantly to a storekeeper. It all looked so nice and easy, and had I never been on the road myself (trying) to sell goods, I might never have thought of this:

Many an occupation that seems playful is in reality serious business.

The efforts of a boy to avoid labor often sum up more than the original task.

The more some people work the more disorder they put into things.

The only time some people hustle is when they realize that they are doing a wrong.

Our ability to accomplish results depends most largely on our enthusiasm.

Statistics show overwhelmingly that the farm is the great training school for the best in life. There must be some outstanding fact or facts that produce this result. Plain, wholesome food, outdoor exercise, and good sleep, make robust health, the first requisite for the work of life. His surroundings are more nearly nature's own. He has to work steadily from morning to night at tasks, whether pleasing to him or not, and in this he gets the greatest industrial asset vouchsafed to one in life.

One morning I arose before daylight to do my chores so that I might begin husking corn at the first light of the sun. I found my brother bent over his books, preparing himself to be a teacher. I do not know what time he left his cozy bed, but I do know that this was no task to one who would soon have to go out at the first flicker of the light, and with frosting fingers, husk corn all day. The tasks that came in after years to make a highly successful lawyer, were easy enough for this corn-husking student.

When one swims in the foam, he is liable at last to settle in the dregs. The farm boy travels with his feet upon the ground. The more normal surroundings build in him an enthusiasm that serves as tonic in all his enterprises in life.

There is something about the farm that preeminently fits a boy to run successfully the gamut of human endeavor.

When health, enthusiasm, and willingness to work are the heritages of the farm, the boy goes forth a graduate of the best of preparatory schools.

The farm fits a boy for the city but the city does not fit a boy for the farm.

Some years ago I was at Calumet, Michigan, where is located one of the great copper mines of the world. The ore taken out of that mine assayed as high as sixty per cent copper and I saw a train-load hauled away to the smelter each thirty minutes.

Early in the morning I went out among the homes of the miners to see how much of that staggering wealth they were getting. The streets were merely wide paths with no border of grass. The houses were apparently one room affairs, boarded up and down, the ends of the boards resting upon the grassless ground. They were unpainted and almost black. As they loomed out of the dense fog, they presented one of the most sordid sights I ever witnessed.

At the time of the strike in 1913, I was discussing the affair with a friend. I said I did not believe that discoveries of rich ore should fall into the entire control of a few persons. His reply was that if one could not get the full benefit of his opportunity that the incentive of the individual would be too greatly curbed. It was then that I wrote:

There is ample room for any man's genius between poverty and the general interests of humanity.

I am the fortunate possessor of a gymnasium at my own home. In the attainment of results for health and mental stimulus, expense was not considered. I employed the best architect I could get. The ventilating and lighting systems are not surpassed by the costliest clubs in the city. A gymnasium like mine is obtainable by rich and poor and highly valuable to each.

It is my garden.

We reap a double harvest when we get recreation in some useful occupation.

You can sometimes fill a position well enough to bar promotion.

Time spent with puzzles comes near being wasted, for even if you work them, you land where you started.

Freak characteristics may become highly valuable if we will only commercialize them.

When an old man forgets more than a young man, he is not as reliable as the young man.

One may sometimes be occupying an inferior position for other reasons than lack of ability.

We have confidence in an old man when holding a position, but lack confidence in him when he is applying for one.

Always charge enough for your services so that people will have respect for your calling.

It is necessary to dress well to command a high price for professional services.

Stripped of ideals, mere money making is among the coarsest of occupations.

War

Strength, if not used to protect, is but weakness.

It would be as imprudent for a nation to make itself rich without means of defense as for a bank to be without safes or vaults.

The strongest military nation cannot continue as such if it spurns the golden rule, for other nations will combine against it.

The nation having the strongest war footing can easily find an excuse for going to war.

When people are having internal dissension, they are glad for an excuse to unite against a foreign foe.

A high birth-rate and the arrogant assumption that a so called superior civilization has the right to destroy an (presumed) inferior people, is a combination that is quite certain to make war.

I have been criticised for assuming that a high birth-rate is a necessary feature tending toward war. Perhaps a high birth-rate alone may not be, but I am still standing my ground and I assure my readers that the combination of a heavy pressure of population and of national egoism, are most liable to find vent in war. When a nation has a population that is growing beyond its productivity, it is best that the rest of the world take heed to arrange for expansion before a sense of superiority takes hold of its people. A light population with high egoism would not be dangerous, but one with both would be highly explosive.

Disaster will follow if any individual, sect, political party, or nation seeks world mastery.

It is hard to move forward and have peace.

The history of the human race always has been, and most likely always will be, that of evolution and revolution.

Youth

Youth has its dreams and its rude awakenings.

Spirit is often a more potent factor in youth than judgment but highly commendable if justified in the ripened years.

Some time in our youth there is liable to come to us antagonism to the best that is in our parents.

There is a time in our youth, and then again in our old age, when we are liable to be over-positive.

That which fires youth generally rings true.

I have not given a chapter to Love. It may seem strange that I should pass this subject, the most hallowed of all. My answer is, that I simply stand in awe before the word. I have noticed the miserable failure of prize contests for definitions so have to offer as my excuse:

Love may be the life of youth and the solace of old age, but it puzzles the ripened years to write its definition.

